

Message Text

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SUBJECT: RUMORS OF ARRESTS IN BULGARIA: A CORRUPTION CASE WITH
POLITICAL OVERTONES?

1. RUMORS OF A "WAVE OF ARRESTS" -- THE NUMBER IS USUALLY GIVEN AS MORE THAN THIRTY -- HAVE BEEN CIRCULATING IN THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS HERE FOR THE PAST THREE WEEKS. ALL OF THE ARRESTED ARE SAID TO BE MEMBERS OF THE AGRARIAN UNION (BAU), AND THEIR NUMBER SUPPOSEDLY INCLUDES EVGENI TRAKOV, DEPUTY MINISTER OF SUPPLY AND THE SON OF FORMER HEAD OF STATE GEORGI TRAYKOV, AND THE BROTHER OF THE PRESENT MINISTER OF JUSTICE, SVETLA DASKALOVA. THE CHARGE IS SAID TO BE BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION.

2. NOTHING HAS APPEARED IN THE PRESS AS YET AND NOTHING IS LIKELY TO UNTIL FORMAL JUDICIAL PROCESSES BEGIN. THERE IS ONE ELEMENT OF CONFIRMATION, NEVERTHELESS: THE FRG EMBASSY HAS TOLD US THAT A NATURALIZED GERMAN NAMED GYUZEV, ORIGINALLY A BULGARIAN, WHO REPRESENTS A SWISS FIRM, IS INVOLVED AND HAS BEEN ARRESTED ON BRIBERY CHARGES. ALTHOUGH THE FRG HAS NO CONSULAR CONVENTION WITH BULGARIA, GERMAN DIPLOMATS HAVE NORMALLY BEEN ALLOWED

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ACCESS TO THEIR ARRESTED NATIONALS WITHIN ABOUT THREE

WEEKS. ACCESS TO GYUZEV HAS NOT YET BEEN ALLOWED, AND THEY DO NOT HAVE MANY DETAILS BUT THEY TOO BELIEVE THAT EVGENI TRAYKOV AND DASKALOVA'S BROTHER ARE AMONG THOSE ARRESTED. AND ALTHOUGH THEY ARE NOT SURE, THEY BELIEVE THAT GYUZEV HIMSELF IS A FORMER MEMBER OF THE BAU.

3. COMMENT: MATTERS ARE OBVIOUSLY QUITE UNCLEAR AND WE REPORT IN ADVANCE OF FURTHER DETAILS PRIMARILY BECAUSE THE CASE MAY VERY WELL LEAD TO SPECULATION IN THE WESTERN PRESS ABOUT A SUPPOSED BAU "CONSPIRACY". THAT THE RUMORS MAKE ALL THOSE ARRESTED MEMBERS OF THE BAU IS CERTAINLY SUGGESTIVE, BUT IT IS FAIRLY THIN EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT A THEORY OF POLITICAL CABAL. FRG EMBOFFS SPECULATE THAT GYUZEV MAY HAVE USED SOME SORT OF "OLD BOY NET" AMONG AGRARIANS TO MAKE CONTACTS TO REACH EVGENI TRAYKOV, WHOSE POSITION MAKES HIM A NATURAL PERSON TO ASK FOR FAVORS. POLICE METHODS HERE BEING WHAT THEY ARE, IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT THOSE ARRESTED "IMPLICATE" OTHERS.

4. WE HAVE COLLECTED ALL AVAILABLE INFORMATION ON THIS MATTER DURING THE LAST THREE WEEKS, NOTING THAT DURING CIRCULATION OF THIS RUMOR IN THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS MORE AND MORE HAS BEEN EMBROIDERED ONTO IT; BUT THE ONLY HARD FACT SO FAR IS THAT GYUZEV IS IN JAIL. IF HE IS A FORMER AGRARIAN (PARA 2), THEN IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE CHARGE WILL BE MADE THAT FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE SERVICES TRIED TO USE HIM TO "CONTACT" MEMBERS OF THE PRESENT BAU WHICH, ACCORDING TO OUR INFORMATION, IS A THOROUGHLY DOCILE INSTRUMENT OF THE BULGARIAN COMMUNIST PARTY.

5. IN A CONVERSATION WITH THE AMBASSADOR LAST WEEK, SAVA GANOVSKI, CHAIRMAN OF THE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, APROPOS OF NOTHING IN PARTICULAR CHARGED THAT IT IS "WELL KNOWN" THAT THE US IS SENDING AGENTS INTO BULGARIA. THIS WOULD NOT IN ITSELF BE REMARKABLE SINCE ALL WP COUNTRIES HAVE BEEN WAGING A CAMPAIGN RECENTLY AGAINST RFE INCLUDING CHARGES THAT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CIA HAS USED RFE AS MEANS TO RECRUIT AGENTS AMONG EMIGRE GROUPS. WHEN ASKED IF GANOVSKI HAD ANY EVIDENCE TO BACK UP HIS CHARGE, HE REFERRED TO THE FACT THAT THE US IN THE 1940'S HELPED SOME ANTI-COMMUNIST AGRARIAN LEADERS (HE CITED DR. GEORGI M. DIMITROV) ESCAPE BULGARIA. HERZ

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